THE

RENDING CHURCH-MEMBER

Regularly call'd Back,

TO

CHRIST, and to his CHURCH.

OR,

A Sober Answer to certain Questions of a Company of discontented and Covenant-deserting Brethren.

IN

Which are laid down clear Grounds of solid conviction, That whosoever doth wilfully neglect either to come to Christ and his true Combinational Church, or to continue with both, is not as yet in a capacity to observe any one of ten remarkable Gospel-Rules, or to partake of any one of ten precious Promises.

Published, { I. For the awakning of sleepy sinners. II. For the withholding of tottering Saints. III. For the winning of wretched back-sliders.

By *Marmaduke Matthew*, lately a Teaching-Elder of the Church of [illegible] in *New-England*.

Jer. 8.5. *Wherefore is this people slidden back by a perpetual backsliding, &c.*

Joh. 6.66,67. *From that time, many of his Disciples went back, and walked no more with him, and Jesus said, Will ye also go away, &c.*

Jer. 6.8. *Be thou instructed, O Jerusalem, lest my soul depart from thee, &c.*

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THE PREFACE TO THE Religious READER.

IT *Is an undeniable Truth, that experience (which is commonly called the* Mistresse of Fooles, *as well as the* Axiomes *and* Maximes *of* Philosophers *) doth make it manifest, that the corruption of the best, (whether of Persons or things, Saints or Angels) is not the best, but the worst corruption. And that*

there may be the greateſt abuſe, of that which might be of the greateſt uſe. As the ſweeteſt Wines, through neglect of well-looking to, doth become the ſoureſt Vineger; ſo through the wiles of Satan, *the wickedneſſe of ſinners, and the weakneſſe of the Saints, the very grace of God, is oft turn'd to wantonneſſe. And every one of the Goſpel Priviledges, and gracious Ordinances of* Congregational *Churches, do produce divers uncomfortable and unchriſtian contentions, among inconſiderate and ill-catechized Profeſſors of Godlineſs: As the cauſe and occaſion of the Compoſing of this preſent reconciling Treatiſe doth clearly declare.*

'Tis remarkeable, that the very firſt riſe and reaſon of thoſe Church-diviſions, that threaten Church-deſolation, is without diſpute the raw and unripe entrance, or rather the rude and raſh ruſhing of Church-obſervers into Church-eſtate, before they have been aſham'd of,

of, ſorrowfull for, and ſeparated from, their Perſonal and Parental abominations; *little conſidering or laying to heart, that ſuch a ſenſible condition is loudly call'd for at their hands; and that from him, who is the Churches Head, as a neceſſary* antecedent-*qualification to a compleat Church-Communion: as 'tis made known*, Ezek. 43. 10, 11. Shew this Houſe to the Houſe of Iſrael, that they may be aſhamed of their wickedneſſe:---And if they be aſhamed,---ſhew them the form of the Houſe. *And Chap.* 44. 7, 9. Ye have brought into my Sanctuary, ſtrangers uncircumciſed in heart, and uncircumciſed in fleſh, to pollute my Houſe. *And verſe the* 19th, Thus ſaith the Lord, uncircumciſed in heart, or uncircumciſed in fleſh, ſhall not enter into my Sanctuary.

Next to this unwiſe and unwarrantable entrance unto Church fellowſhip, 'tis not difficult for to diſcern, that inconſiderate and uncircumſpect combining,

bining, *and covenanting with a Church of Saints, to watch one over another, and to walk one with another by Gospel-Rule, doth become in the conclusion a cruel snare to the souls and consciences of such* Combiners; *who (by reason of the remote distance of their several dwellings, being too many members very many miles from their publique Meeting house) do impose upon themselves an utter* impossibility *of keeping that Covenant which they had bound their souls for to keep, in coming ordinarily to Publique worship on Lords Daies, in one place, according to the Pattern; in* 1 Cor. 14.23. When the whole Church are come together in one place, *&c.*

Certainly they cannot come together (without notorious inconvenience) every Sabboth day in one place, at morning Sacrifice, and evening Incense; I mean, at forenoon and afternoon Instituted worship, who are so farre from co-habiting in one Corporation, *that they have no*

their abode in one County. *And by neceſſary conſequence, they muſt fall headlongly on one of the fierce hornes of this fearfull* Dilemma; *Either to be wanting in publique, or to be wronging in private. If they carefully obſerve their watch, and keep their Covenant with their fellow-members abroad, then they muſt careleſly and cruelly neglect their watch, and break their Covenant with their own Families at home.*

When Profeſſors are found thus to fail both in their Ingreſſe *to, and* Progreſſe *in Church-fellowſhip, 'tis no wonder at all, if their* Egreſſe *therefrom be anſwerable; namely, injurious and ſcandalous to Brethren within, and to Neighbours without, by their hatefull and horrible rejection of the heavenly* Oracles, *from being the Rule, Square, and Touchſtone of their language, lives, and actions. As ſtrong fences are made to reſtrain the extravagant wanderings of brutiſh* Animals; *ſo the Sacred Scriptures are appointed to curb and bridle the wild*

and wanton wits and ſpirits of the unruly reaſonable creatures. When the Children of diſobedience *make bold to tread theſe fences down, who knows where or when they will ſtay or ſtand? When violent* Torrents *bear away and break down the withſtanding banks and* dammes, *who can tell at what time or place they will make a* ſtoppe? *When ſpiritual* Paſſengers *venture to ſpread the ſailes of their affections to the wind of their own wills, canne they expect to* Anchor *any where this ſide the brink of the bottomeleſſe pit? For the preventing of the* Shipwrack, *of whoſe Faith and good Conſcience, and for the further provoking of praying Perſons, to Petition that God would perſwade* Japhet *to dwell in the Tents of* Shem; *and cauſe the two ſticks of* Joſeph *and* Judah, *to become one in the hand of* David *our King; that they (ſpeaking a pure language, and leading a pious life) may be in a capacity to ſerve the Lord with own ſhoulder, and own conſent;*

ſent; is his aimes in theſe endeavoures, who would be among thoſe few that follow the Lord fully; and is

unfeignedly

thy fellow-ſervant

From my Study in *Swanſey* the 12th inſtant of the 10th Moneth, 1658.

MARMADUKE MATTHEWS.

Dearely

Dearely

Dearely Beloved

Diſſenting Brethren,

Grace, Truth, and Peace, be manifeſted more and more to you, in you, and by you, and may God the Giver thereof be pleaſed to ſay, *Amen.*

Is ſo, that perceiving you (at leaſt ſome of you) to be in ſome good meaſure inform'd by him who teacheth his obedient Hearers to profit; how to argue a point in Controverſie, according to Gods Sacred *Oracles*; I oft did, and do (through grace) find my heart ſtirr'd up to be praiſing the Lord, and to be petitioning for you; knowing that to diſcourſe Argumentatively, is ſuch a commendable courſe, as I both approve of very much, and practice

not

not a little; becauſe I obſerve it to be a thing of good report amongſt the eminenteſt of the Saints, long before there were any Records of humane Learning in the world; as it plainly appeares by what is openly profeſt of the *Patriarch Job*, as well in his calling upon God, as in his contending with men, in *Job.* 23. 4. *I would plead my cauſe before him, and fill my mouth with Arguments.* So *Job* the 13. & 16. *Now hear my diſputation, and give ear to the Arguments of my lips.* Whoſe guiſe (by this it ſeems) was to fill his mouth with Arguments, to own the forcibleneſſe of right reaſoning; and withall, to abhorre ſuch arguing, as being well weighed, would be found wanting: as you cannot chuſe but know, if you can tell what is extant in his Book on that account.

Beſides that, (which is more then that) Religious creatures are commiſſioned to reaſon in their Requeſts with their Creator; as he is pleaſed to inform us by the mouth of the Prophet *Iſaiah*, Chap. 1. 18. *Come let us reaſon together, ſaith the Lord.* So Chap. 43. 26. *Plead with me*, &c. And to render a reaſon of their hope of happineſſe, and of Heaven, to ſuch of their neighbours as are diſſatisfied with their behaviour, by

the Miniſtry of the Apoſtle *Peter*, 1 *Pet.* Chap. 3.13. *Be ready to give an Anſwer alwaies to every man, that asketh you a reaſon of the hope that is in you with meekneſſe and reverence.*

In ſpight then of all contradiction, it muſt be confeſt, that carnal and careleſſe *Gallio* will riſe up in judgment, and condemn all ſuch Goſpellers, as are regardleſſe of reaſon or rule; as you have or may reade, *Acts* 18. 14,17. *As Paul was about to open his mouth, Gallio ſaid to the Jews, if it were a matter of wrong, or an evil deed; O ye Jews, I would according to reaſon maintain you---But Gallio cared nothing for theſe things*, &c.

Although the Quſtions which came from you, were not particularly directed to me, any more then to another man; yet, being perſwaded, that 'tis ſome part of that duty I owe to my faithfull Creator, and fellow-creatures, to endeavour the reducing of ſuch ſouls, as I diſcern to be gone after *Satan*, through his ſubtilty, their ſimplicity, and their ignorance of the Scriptures; which (as we are inform'd by the Lords own mouth) is the main in-let to monſtrous errours: as 'tis revealed to us, *Mat.* 22. 29. *Jeſus anſwered, and ſaid, Ye do erre not know-*

knowing the Scriptures; neither the power of God. I conceived it not inconvenient (but Chriſtian) to return to them (and ſo to you) this *affirmative* and infallible Anſwer; which is, That all perſons, that would be eſteemed Members of any reformed Church, are to be orderly Saints: witneſſe what is written in 1 *Cor.* 14.33. *God is not the Author of confuſion, but of Peace, as in all the Churches of the Saints.* And the 40 Verſe, *Let all things be done decently and in order*, &c.

The whole ſumme and ſubſtance of which Queſtions, (and what may be Chriſtianly deduced therefrom, concerning your deſerting the Society of your fellow-ſervants) may be gathered and wound up into this one Argument.

THAT Church and company of Goſpel Profeſſors, which doth not conſiſt of circumſpect walkers, and orderly Saints, is to be deſerted and ſeperated from, as unclean.

BUT the Church and Company of Goſpel Profeſſors, which is at *A*, doth not conſiſt of circumſpect walkers, and regular Saints.

THEREFORE the Church or Company of Goſpel Profeſſors which is at *A*, is to be deſerted and ſeparated from, as unclean.

In

In which Argument, the Propoſition or firſt part is ſuch a piece of truth as is impregnable, and undeniable, becauſe it is agreeable to Scripture-rules; according to which every Goſpel-ſpeaker is enjoyned to ſpeak, and every peaceable walker is warranted to walk: as 'tis moſt evident in *Exod.* 23 13. *And in all things that I have ſaid unto you, be circumſpect, and make no mention of the names of other gods, neither let it be heard out of thy mouth.* So *Gal.* 6. 16. *And as many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them, and mercy: and upon the Iſrael of God.* And 1 *Pet.* 4. 11. *If any man ſpeak, let him ſpeak according to the Oracles of God.*

That ſuch Church-Members as are diſorderly walkers or irregular livers, are to be deſerted and ſeparated from, is ſuch an expreſſion as is above the reach of any rational contradiction; yea, 'tis ſuch a pregnant poſition, as I cannot chuſe but readily ſubſcribe unto, not only by a downright *affirmation*, That it is ſo; but alſo by a five-fold *confirmation*, That it ſhould not be otherwiſe. Whereof

The firſt is in *Acts* 19. 9. *When divers were hardned and believed not, but ſpake evil of that way before the multitude, he departed*

departed from them, and ſeparated the Diſciples.

The ſecond, is in 1 *Cor.* 5. 9, 11, 13. *I wrote to you in an Epiſtle not to company with fornicators, or with the covetous, or a drunkard, with ſuch a one not to eat.*—*Therefore put away from among your ſelves that wicked perſon.*

The third, is in 2 *Cor.* 6 17. *Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye ſeparate, ſaith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive you.*

The fourth, is in 2 *Theſ.* 3. 6, 14. *Now we commaad you Brethren, in the Name of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, that ye withdraw from every Brother that walkes diſorderly.*

The fifth and laſt, is in 2 *Timoth.* Chap 3. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 verſes. *And this know alſo, that perilous times ſhall come in the laſt daies; for men ſhall be lovers of their own ſelves, covetous, and lovers of pleaſures more then lovers of God; having a form of godlineſſe, but denying the power thereof: from ſuch turn away.*

Only let it be diligently obſerved, that he that would be found in the number of Chriſts faithfull Servants, is to have an eye both to the *matter* which he is to act in, and

alſo

alſo to the *manner* of his actings. In reſpect of the firſt, the Maſter requires his Servant to do THIS, namely, *what* he doth command; and in reſpect of the ſecond, to do it THUS, namely, *as 'tis* commanded. THE ONE is no more then the body or *outſide* of acceptable ſervice, but the OTHER is the ſoul and *inſide* of the ſame.

That nothing be done in Chriſts Name, ſave only ſuch a particular, for which there is an expreſſe Command, is the *firſt*, and Eſſential part of a Church-Members imployment: as 'tis apparent to any that is verſt in Scripture, *Zach.* 7.7. *Should ye not hear the words of the Lord, which the Lord had cried unto you by the mouthes of the former Prophets*, &c. So *Luke* 5 5 *At thy Command, Lord I'le let down the net*, &c.

And that it may be performed in no other way, then as 'tis commanded, is the other and *beſt* half thereof: as is teſtified in *Rom.* 14.23. *Whatſoever is not of Faith, is ſinne.*

Unleſſe there be a joynt concurrence of theſe ſeveral parts in a Profeſſors performances, the work is ſo farre from being a good work, as that it doth not (at all) excell

that punishing of vice which was performed by *Jehu* (mentioned 2 *King.* 10. 16. *And he said, Come and see my zeal for the Lord.* But in *Hos.* 1. 4. 'tis counted cruelty, *I will avenge the blood of Jezrel upon the House of Jehu.*) or that provoking to vertue, which was expressed by *Judas*, and such as he, in *Mat.* 7. 22. *Many will say, Lord, Lord, have we not in thy Name cast out Devils, and by thy Name done many great works,* &c.

In short, 'tis such an abhominable Sacrifice, as is the shedding of mans blood, if the blessed God be worthy to be believed in what he saith in *Isaiah* 1. 15. *When ye make many Prayers, I will not hear,--your hands are full of blood.* And Chap. 66. 3. *He that kills an Ox, is, as if he he slew a man, he that sacrifizeth a Lamb, as if he cut off a dogs neck; he that offers an oblation, as if he offered swines blood; he that burneth Incense, as if he blesseth an Idol. Yea, they have chose their own waies, and their soul delights in their abominations.*

As 'tis a truth that none dare deny, that separation from prophane sinners (though professing Saints) is such a service for the MATTER of it, as Christ doth command; as 'tis to be seen by what is already shewn.

So

So 'tis no falſhood to affirm, That ſuch a ſeparation for the MANNER thereof, is not a Chriſtian or commendable ſeparation, if it be not carried on according to Scripture Precepts or Patterns: as 'tis moſt clear by what is expreſsly required by the Almighty himſelf in ſeveral places: as *Act* 7. 44. & *Heb.* 8. 5. *See that thou do all things according to the pattern ſhewed thee in the Mount.* And 1 *Cor.* 14. 40. *Let all things be done decently and in order.*

And waſt never obſerved by any of you, that though *Uzza*, and *Uzziah*, did obſerve a right ORDINANCE, in the carriage of the Ark, and offering of Incenſe; yet, the one was deſtroyed, and the other diſgrac't, and degraded, for the meer miſcarriage that was manifeſted thereabouts, in not obſerving a right ORDER; as all may ſee in that terrible-treble Looking-glaſs that is left for Church-Miniſters, for Court-Magiſtrates, and for Church-Members to look upon, in 1 *Chron.* 15. 13. *The Lord our God made a breach upon us, becauſe we ſought him not after the due order.* And 2 *Chron.* 26. 16. *But when Uzziah was ſtrong, his heart was lifted up to his deſtruction; for he tranſgreſt againſt the Lord his God, and went into the Temple of the Lord, to burn*

Incenſe on the Alter of Incenſe. So Chap. 30. 18, 20. *For a multitude of the people, even many of Ephraim and Manaſſeth, Iſſachar and Zebulon, had not cleanſed themſelves, yet did they eat the Paſſover otherwiſe then 'twas written. But Hezekiah prayed for them, ſaying, The good Lord pardon every one.--And the Lord hearkened to Hezekiah, and healed the people.*

Or can it be but confeſt and acknowledged by all of you, that the only Orthodox Order, in making of ſeperation from Church-Communion, is, That it may not be, till after the firſt and ſecond Admonition be adminiſtred, and that by ſuch a power as is ſuperior to to the party offending; except you diſapprove (which God forbid) of what Chriſt doth preſcribe, *Mat.* 18. 15, 16, 17. *If thy Brothers ſhall treſpaſſe againſt thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone, and if he hear thee, thou haſt gain'd him.* So *Joh.* 8. 17. *'Tis alſo written in your Law, that the Teſtimony of two Witneſſes is true.* So 2 *Cor.* 13. 1. *In the mouth of two or three Witneſſes ſhall every Word be eſtabliſhed.* And *Tit.* 3. 10. *A man that is an Heretick, after the firſt and ſecond Admonition, reject.*

And

And for the Aſſumption (which is the ſecond part of the Argument, which by your Queſtions you ſeem to urge) 'tis utterly deſtitute of any proof; whether you mean the whole body of the *Congregational* Church, whereof ye are Members, and which was for a long time owned (as by others, ſo eſpecially) by your ſelves, to be one of thoſe reformed Churches of *Chriſtendome*, which in Scripture-language, are called Queens, as in *Cant.* 6.8. *There are threeſcore Queens, and fourſcore Concubins, and Virgins without nuuber.*

And therefore know it, and that not ſo much from the Pen of a *dying* man, as from the Spirit of the *living* God, That no Queen (or ſuch a Church) is by deffamation, or any other way, to be defiled by any perſon, upon pain of dreadfull deſtruction to the defiler: witneſſe what is on Record on that account, 1 *Cor.* 3.17. *If any man defile the Temple of God, him ſhall God deſtroy; for the Temple of God is holy, which Temple ye are.* That is to ſay, the Church of *Corinth.*

Or whether you would be underſtood by your writing, to point at ſome of the particular Members of that Political body; 'tis very apparent (I think) that orderly

proof of any diſorderly practice among them was never yet produced.

Is it not rational and regular, that they ſhould have a fair and open tryal, together with a clear conviction, that the accuſed ones are *barren branches*, *Joh.* 15. and 26. *Twice dead trees*, Jud. 12. *Rotten Members*, Gal. 5. 12. *Choaking thornes*, Mat. 13. 22. Or *wallowing ſwine*, 2 Pet. 2. 22. before they can with any good grounds, good conſcience, or according to Chriſt, be diſfranchized of their Citizens freedome, deprived of their Church-Priviledges; much leſſe diſmembred from the body, ſupplanted from the Vineyard, rooted from the Field, driven from the Fold, and Flock to which they do relate, and belong: leaſt of all is the whole Body, Field, or Fold, to be deſerted, but both the one and the other is to be participated with, in what is of good report; and faithfully and frequently provok't to what is good, by all ſuch of their fellow-members, as would not be eſteemed wilfull villifiers of Chriſts blood, diſobeyers of his directions, deſpiſers and deſpiters of his holy Spirit. From all which, the good Lord deliver us, leaſt otherwiſe we might periſh with the Apoſtates, which you read are indicted, arrained, and threatned to

be

be executed, in *Heb.* Chap. 10 25, 26, 27, 28, 29 verſes. *Not forſaking the aſſembling our ſelves together, as the manner of ſome is, but exhorting one another, and ſo much the more as ye ſee the day approaching; for if we ſinne wilfully after that we have receiv'd the knowledge of the truth, there remaines no more Sacrifice, but a certain direfull looking for of vengeance, and fiery indignation which devoures the Adverſaries.-- Of how much more ſore puniſhment ſuppoſe ye ſhalle he be thought worthy, who hath troddden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the Covenant wherewith he was ſanctified an unholy thing, and hath done deſpight to the Spirit of grace.*

Therefore the *Concluſion* (which is the laſt part of the Argument, which was urg'd concerning Church-members qualification, and Communion) concludes nothing more then this one thing, *viz* That the charity of ſome old, and ſundry young Profeſſors of Chriſtianity is ſo little, that 'tis ſcarce viſible to ordinary eyes; and that Chriſtianity it ſelf, is leſſe legible in their lives, who walk ſo quite contrary to Chriſts Church waies: as 'tis mavelous plain by this one eminent particular, which is ſuch a piece of inæquity (that I ſay not iniquity) that if

my heart were not very bad, it would wish that it might even weep teares of blood to think thereupon, knowing by experience, that such of your Church-neighbours, as have but so much humanity or civil honesty as was in the former *Pharisees*, the contemners of Christ, who did not, do not, dare not, (for their very necks) take from the worst of their foes, as much as will amount to the value of thirteenpence halfpenny, contrary to the Lawes of the Land.

Yet, not a few (as I have been faithfully informed) of the Church-members that have left the Church with you, who had publiquely bound their souls (if not explicitely yet) implicitely by a Curse, and by an Oath, to be Covenant-keepers with Christ and with his Church, in the presence of God, Angels, and men (as you cannot chuse but acknowledg and confesse, in case you have any more then ordinary acquaintance with the Name and Nature of a Church-Covenant: as 'tis held out for our Information and Imitation, in *Deut.* 29. 12. *That thou shouldest enter inter into Covenant with the Lord thy God, and into his Oath, which the Lord thy God maketh with thee.* So *Ezek.* 20. 37. *I will bring you into the bond of the Covenant.* Also *Jer.* 50. 5. *They shall ask the way in Zion, with their faces thither-*

thither-ward, ſaying, Come let us joyn our ſelves to the Lord, in a perpetual Covenant that ſhall not be forgotten. And *Neh.*10.29. *They clave to enter into a Curſe, and into an Oath to walk in Gods Law,* &c.) Who notwithſtanding all their ſuch Bonds and Obligations, make no bones of bereaving, I know not how may of their beſt friends and Brethren in fellowſhip, of their good Names, which are rated above riches or Inheritance, and that in the judgment of the Eldeſt Sonne of wiſdom. *Prov.*22. 1. *A good Name is rather to be choſen then great riches.*

When I am given to underſtand, that you (in conformity to the counſell of the wonderfull Counſellor, *Joh.* 8. 46. *Which of you convinceth me of ſinne.* So *Mat.* 7. 5. *Thou Hippocrite, firſt caſt out the beame from thine own eye. and then ſhalt thou clearly ſee the mote in thy Brothers.* And *Gal* 6. 1. *If a man be overtaken, reſtore him in the ſpirit of meekneſſe.*)

I ſay, when I am given to underſtand, that you in conformity to theſe Scripture Rules, do ſtudy and ſtrive to reſtore ſuch of your Covenant-Brethren, as you conceive to be Covenant-breakers; by convincing them ſolidly, that this or that PRACTICE, is a regulary condemn'd

ſin,

ſin, and that this or that PERSON among them, is a regulary accus'd ſinner; then (Chriſt aſiſting me) I ſhall deſire and indeavour openly to appear to be one that is engaged to approve of, and to plead for ſuch a Chriſtian proceeding.

In the mean time, I beſeech you to bear with me for my taking ſo much boldneſſe, as (out of my inward loyalty to my glorious Saviour, and out of my unfeigned love to your precious ſouls) to bear witneſſe that ye are (as yet) ſo farre from being very regular walkers, as that as long as ye continue either againſt Church-Covenant, or out of Church-Communion, ſo long you cannot be groundedly conceived to be in a capacity to keep any one of ten remarkeable Rules of Chriſt, which we are commanded to keep as heedfully as we ſhould the Apple of our eye, *Prov* 7.2. And for the preſumptuous breaking of the leaſt of them, we ſhould expoſe our ſelves, to be not only very contemptible perſons, but alſo, which is farre worſe, to be found notorious guilty ones, and lawleſſe livers: as 'tis to be ſeen by what is teſtified in *Mat.* 5.19. *Whoſoever therefore ſhall break one of theſe leaſt Commandements, and ſhall teach men ſo, he ſhall be call'd the*

the leaſt in the Kingdom of Heaven. So *James* 2.10. *He that keepes the whole Law, and offends in one point, he is guilty of all.*

And leaſt I ſhould ſeem to ſlander you, (or any other) by affirming, That ſuch Profeſſors of Chriſtianity, as knowingly refuſe, either to come into Church-Covenant, or to continue in Church-Communion, are (as yet) not in a capacity to obey any one of ten very remarkeable Commands, which all that would be bleſſed, and regular walkers are found to walk by; conſider ſeriouſly how I *confirm* that *Affirmation.* Oh, that you were but half ſo well pleaſed to peruſe and ponder upon them, as I am willing to take the paines to point them out, and to penne them for you!

1. The firſt, is about the avouching of the God of Chriſt, and of the Church, to be your God in Covenant, by your preſence and profeſſion in the publique Congregation: according to the commendable pattern, in *Deut* 26 17, &c. *Thou haſt avouched the Lord this day to be thy God, and to walk in his waies; and he hath avouched thee,* &c. So *Iſaiah* 44.5. *One ſhall ſay, I am the Lords, and another ſhall call himſelf by the Name of Jacob, and another ſhall ſubſcribe with his own hand to the Lord, and ſirname himſelf by the*

name

name of Iſrael. Alſo *Jerem.*50.5. *Ezek.*20. & the 37. *Acts* 2.46,47. *Rom.* 12.1. & 2 *Cor.*8 5.&c.

Is't poſſible for any perſon to diſcharge that publique duty, that doth ordinarily decline the publique Meeting-place?

2. The ſecond, is that which binds Believers to be admitting ſuch as be in the Faith, into Church-fellowſhip; in conformity to Chriſts command, in *Rom.*14.1,3. *Him that is weak in the Faith receive, but not to doubtfull diſputation, for God hath received him.*

Where Chriſt doth enjoyn this ſervice, what Chriſtian dares omit the ſame, either to neglect to offer his own ſelf to Chriſt and to the Church, or to be abſent when he ſhould be preſent at the receiving of others that Chriſt hath received? Only ſuch a one as domineering *Diotrephes* dares to do ſo. *Joh* 9 10. *I Wrote to the Church, but Diotrephes, who loves to have the preheminence among them, receives us not,* &c.

3. The third is concerning the Electing of Church Officers, by lifting up of the hand, as oft as occaſion requires, *viz.* of TEACHERS, PASTORS, RULERS, and DEACONS; in immitation of thoſe circumſpect Walkers, recorded *Acts* 1.23. *And they appointed two,* &c. So *Act.* 6.3. *Where-*

fore

fore Brethren, look ye out among you, &c. And verſe 5. *The ſaying pleaſed the multitude, and they choſe Stephen.* And Chap. 14.23. (According to the Queens tranſlation) *And when they hah ordained them Elders by Election in EVERY Church, and prayed and faſted, they commended them to the Lord in whom they believed.* So 1 *Tim* 3. 10 *Let theſe alſo be firſt proved, then let them uſe the Office of a Deacon.*

Are they capable to have a lifted up hand in the Church-Officers Election, who have no heart to continue in Church-ordered Communion?

4. The fourth, is that which doth declare a Chriſtians duty to be duly edifying ſome Church of Chriſt by his perſonal preſence, Prayers, and paines: as 'tis clearly manifeſt by what is written in 1 *Cor.*14.1. *Follow after charity, and deſire ſpiritual gifts, but rather that ye may propheſie.* And verſe 12. *Seek that ye may excell to the edifying of the Church.* So *Eph.*2. verſe the 19,20,21,22. *Ye are fellow-Citizens with the Saints, built upon the foundation of the Apoſtles and Prophets, Jeſus Chriſt himſelf being the chief Corner-ſtone, in whom all building is fitly framed, and growth together unto an holy Temple. In whom ye are alſo builded togethe*

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for an habitation of God through the Spirit. So 1 *Pet.* 2 5. *Ye alſo, as living ſtones, are built up a ſpiritual houſe; an holy Prieſthood, to offer up ſpiritual Sacrifice acceptable to God by Jeſus Chriſt.* And *Jud.* 20. *Building up your ſelves on your moſt holy Faith, praying in the holy Spirit.*

Are they in a capacity to conform to theſe commands, who do not cloſe with, and conjoyn in the Church-covenant? You know that they are farre from being Church-edifiers who are Church defamers, much more Church-deſpiſers, which I truſt you are not; or at leaſtwiſe, you ſhould abhor to be.

5. The fifth, is that which exhorts and neceſſitates a Chriſtian to be informing the Church in their ſolemn Meetings, of the obſtinacy of an offending Church Member; in order to that memorable inſtruction, *Mat.* 18 17. *But if he ſhall neglect to hear them then tell it to the Church.*

Can any be commiſſioned to be a witneſſe as upon Oath, againſt wrongfull walking, who is himſelf an Alien or an unworthy and unwarrantable walker?

6. The ſixth, is that which fairely and fully inſtitutes Chriſts Covenant-ſervants, to be ſpiritual Judges of ſuch ſouls as are either to

to be excommunicated from Church-conſociation, or elſe to be abſolved from Church-excommunication: as it appeares by what is extent, *Pſal.* 149 8. *To bind their Kings with chains, and their Nobles with fletters.* So 1 *Cor.* 5.12. *Do you not judge them that are within.* So 2 *Cor.* 10.6. *Having in readineſſe, to revenge all diſobedience, when your obedience is fulfilled,* &c. And Chap. 2.6. *Sufficient to ſuch a man is this puniſhment.*

Is't poſſible that ſuch a perſon ſhould be in a capacity to partake of ſuch high honour, as hath not a nail or Name in Chriſts houſe, no more then *Sanballat* the *Horonite*, or *Tobiah* the *Ammonite*, noted with a black coal, in *Neh.* 2. 19, 20. *But when Sanballat the Horonite, and Tobiah the Ammonite, and Geſhem the Arabian heard it, the laught us to ſcorn, and deſpiſed us,* &c.

7. The ſeventh, is that which goades and ſpurres faithfull Parents to offer their Infants to fellowſhip with the Church, in the firſt Seal of the Covenant of Grace, which doth ſeal their grafting into Chriſt, as it appeares by many memorable preſcriptions and Prædictions, as *Cant.* 1.8. *Feed thy Kids by the Tents of the Shepherds.* So Chap. 4 7. *Thy teeth are like a flock of Sheep, whereof every one brings forth twinnes.* And Chap. the 6. &

6. & 5 The ſame words. So *Iſaiah* the 49. 22. *They ſhall bring thy Sons in their arms, and thy daughters ſhall be carried upon their ſhoulders.* And Chap. 59 21. *My Spirit that is upon thee, and my words which I have put into thy mouth, ſhall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy ſeed, nor out of the mouth of thy ſeeds ſeed.* Mark. 10. 14, 15. *But Jeſus ſaid, Suffer little Children to come unto me, for of ſuch is the Kingdom of God.* And *Act.* 15. 10. *Now certain aroſe, ſaying, That 'twas needfull to circumciſe. But Peter ſaid unto them, Why tempt ye God to put a yoke upon the neck of the Diſciples.* Note that Children of eight daies old, are here called Diſciples of Chriſt, and 'tis granted by all, that Diſciples of Chriſt may be baptized.

Are not the Infants of Believers, to be accounted believing Infants, ſeeing he ſtiles them ſo, who ſpake as never man ſpake? Is there not a paſſive, as well as an active Faith? Is not the firſt before the ſecond, in all Chriſts Flock; yea, in young Infants, as well as in old folks? Hath he not told and taught you, that 'tis by ſuch a Faith as is in Believers Infants (which is a paſſive Faith) that the *Kingdom of God is received?*

If

If it be a truth, that the leaſt Child is a rational creature, as well as the eldeſt man, though not in reſpect of the act or exerciſe, yet in regard of the habit and root of reaſon, which is a reaſonable Spirit.

Is't not as true, that the leaſt child of the Covenant of Grace, is to be acknowledged a Chriſtian, and a gracious child, although not for, or from any act or exerciſe of grace or Chriſtianity, yet for and from the root and ground thereof, which is the gracious ſpirit of Chriſt?

If he embo'dneth to bring ſuch Babes to himſelf, who dares withhold them from him? Or are they in a capacity to preſent their ſeed to the Church, who abſent themſelves from the ſame?

8. The eighth, is that which helps feeble and forgetfull Saints to encreaſe in heavenly-mindedneſſe, and in holineſſe, by eating *often* of Chriſts body by Faith, at the Love-Feaſt of the Lords-Supper, which is the Seal that Seals their growth in grace; to which end 'tis ordained to be uſed and obſerved, *Luk.* 22. 19. *And he took the bread, and gave thankes and brake it, and gave unto them, ſaying, This is my body which was given for you, this do in remembrance of me: Likewiſe alſo the Cup, ſaying, This is the Cup of the*

New Teſtament in my blood, which is ſhed for you. So *Joh.* 6. 53. *Except ye eat the fleſh of the Son of Man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you.* And 1 *Cor.* 11. the 24, 25, 26 verſes, *After the ſame manner, he took the Cup ſaying, This Cup is the New Teſtament in my blood; this do ye as often as ye drink it.* So verſe 26. *For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup,* &c.

Can ſuch perſons be deemed fit gueſts, at ſuch Church-Feaſts, which have not admittance and abode in Church-fellowſhip? And how can they eat *often* at the Lords Table, who do not eat once in a year, or in their life time?

9. The ninth, is that which intereſts Chriſts Members in voting about ſending of Church-Meſſengers, and in writing of Church-Letters; which in ſuch caſes ought to be conformed unto, by all conformable Chriſtians: as moſt evidently appears by what was practiſed, *Act.* 13. 22, 23. *Then it pleaſed the Apoſtles and Elders, with the WHOLE Church, to ſend choſen men of their own company to Antioch, and wrote Letters after this manner,* &c. So 2 *Cor.* 3. 1. *Need we (as others) Epiſtles of commendation.*

Can one be a chuſer of Church-Meſſengers, that is not himſelf choſen to be a Church-member?

Or

Or hath he a vote in writting of Church-Letters, who hath no name in Chrifts Church-Book of life, which is the honour of holy ones? *Isa.*4.3. *He that is left in Zion, and he that remaineth in Jerusalem, shall be called holy, even every one that is written among the living in Jerusalem.* And *Rev.* 22.19. *And if any man shall take away from the words of the Book of this Prophesie, God shall take his part out of the Book of life, and out of the holy City, and out from the things that are written in this Book.*

10. The tenth and last, is that which knocks loudly at the gates of godly hearts, to be weekly contributing, and openly bringing their Tribute, royal rent, and spiritual Subsides, to the Lord of their soil and souls, on the Lords day, as they are directed to do, who would be deemed free Members of a reformed Church, in the Scriptures of truth. *Deut.* 16. 10, 16, *And thou shalt keep the Feast of Weeks unto the Lord thy God, with a Tribute of a free will-offering of thy hand which thou shalt give to the Lord thy God, according as he hath blessed thee.* And verse 16. *They shall not appear before the Lord empty.* Also 1 *Cor.* 16. 1, 2. *Let every one upon the first day of the week, lay by him in store as God hath prospered him.* And vers. the 1.

As I have given order to the Churches of Galatia, ſo do you.

Is not Jeſus Chriſt the King of the bleſſed Gentiles, as well as of the believing Jews? And is not he as worthy of Subſidy as of Sovereignty? Or are thoſe perſons likely to preſent him with voluntary contribution, that do not liſt themſelves among his skirmiſhing and contending Souldiers, or ſworn Subjects in his viſible Camp and Kingdom?

As 'tis prov'd that none but ſuch believing Chriſtians, as come under the bond of the Covenant, amongſt Church-Members, are in an uncondemnable poſture, or as yet in a capacity to obſerve and keep, either *every* one, or *any* one of thoſe ten aforementioned remarkeable Goſpel *Precepts*; ſo 'tis as plain, that all thoſe Perſons, which are not compleatly come to that promotion, together with ſuch Profeſſors of godlineſſe, as do not firmly continue, and perſevere in that place; cannot warrantably (without preſumption) make uſe of, as to apply to themſelves, any one of ten merciſull and memorable Goſpel *Promiſes*: although there caſe and condition ſhould never ſo much *require*, or their ſouls *deſire* the ſame.

They are theſe: (1.) The *Promiſe* of a Place among excelling Saints. (2.) Of pardon of

of ſin under Seal. (3.) A princely prizing of Chriſtians as Chriſtians. (4.) Proſperity of Spirit. (5.) Freedom from fear. (6.) A New Name. (7.) Childrens good education. (8.) Spiritual Joy. (9.) Outward goods. (10 and laſtly,) A *Promiſe* of a true title to Divine Teachers, and reformed Paſtors.

The firſt whereof, is the *Promiſe* of a *place* amongſt Saints that excell in vertue, ſuch as Chriſt doth profeſſe his delight is in: as 'tis ſhewn in that golden prophetick Pſalm, *Pſal.* 16.3. concerning which happineſſe he hath paſt his Royal Word in both his Teſtaments, namely, in *Iſaiah* 56. 3, &c. *Let not the ſon of the ſtranger, that hath joyned himſelf to the Lord, ſay, The Lord hath ſeparated me from his people: nor let the Eunuch ſay, I am a dry tree: For thus ſaith the Lord to the Eunuches that keep my Sabboths, and chuſe the things that pleaſe me, and take hold on my Covenant, even unto them will I give in mine Houſe, and within my walls a* Place, &c.

Is the preferring to ſuch a *place* ſuch a Priviledge, and appertaining to ſuch contrite-hearted perſons, as do ſo take hold on Chriſt, who is the ſumme and ſubſtance, as well as the Surety of the *Covenant* of Grace, as that they both *make* and *keep* Covenant with God among his holy and Houſhold Servants,

then (tell me, I pray) what evil elſe, or leſſe then downright excluſion, or direfull keeping out, and ſtaving off, from coming to Chriſts Church-Camp, can be the expectation of careleſſe wretches, and unclean waiters among Church-neighbours? according to that awkening and wounding Commination, *Rev.* 21.27. *There ſhall not enter into it* (*i. e.* the reformed Church) *any thing that defileth, nor any thing that worketh abomination, or maketh a lye.*

And what, ſave diſconſolate excommunication from Communion and continuance in Chriſts ſpiritual Kingdom, will be the Portion of unconſtant and unconſcionable walkers therein? If Chriſts own mouth may be credited, which doth manifeſt as much, *Mat* 8.11, *&c. Many ſhall come from the Eaſt, and Weſt, and ſhall ſit down with Abraham, Iſaac, and Jacob, in the Kingdom of Heaven.* Is't no grief to *non-comers* to any Church of Chriſt, that they have no place there? Or is't no diſgrace to *non-continuers* in Church-communion, that the red Dragon, and *rending* Devil, hath with his fawning tayl, or frowning teeth, drawn or drag'd them thence?

2. The ſecond, is the *Promiſe* of *pardon* under Seal, or a feeling aſſurance of forgiveneſſe

giveneſſe of ſins; which is ſweetly ſpoken of in ſeveral Scriptures: as *Iſaiah* 33. 20, 24. *Look upon Zion, the City of our Solemnities, their eyes ſhall ſee Jeruſalem a quiet habitation, and the Inhabitants ſhall not ſay, I am ſick; the people that dwell therein, ſhall be forgiven their iniquities.* Of which ſpecial favour Chriſt himſelf ſpeaks very fully, *Mat.* 26. 26, &c. *And as they were eating, Jeſus took bread, and bleſſed it,* &c. *And he took the cup——and gave it to them, ſaying, Drink ye all of it; for this is my blood of the New-Teſtament, which is ſhed for many, for the remiſſion of ſinnes.*

Is ſuch an unfeigned aſſurance ordinarily found in any ſouls, ſave only in ſuch as have a name or a nail in Chriſts ſpiritual Houſe, whereof his loyal and viſibly holy Houſhold Servants are the lively ſtones? Would you (O my friends) have Chriſt to give you a full and free forgiveneſſe of all your former *ſinnes*, while you *ſinfully* and wilfully withhold or withdraw your perſonal preſence from the Lords ſoul-feaſting Supper? Can ye poſſibly receive Chriſts *ſealed* pardon, and withall keep your ſelves out of the reach of Chriſts *ſealing* appointments? Can you procure under his hand, a *non-obſtante*, or toleration for your abſence from his Houſe,

and *non-appearance* at his doorposts? Farre be it from you to *confound* the Ordinances of the Lord, with the Lord of Ordinances, and to say, That the *creating-Ruler*, and his *created-Rules*, are not to be distinguished, but are the same. I do beseech you for his sake, whose your souls are, let that be the frantick conception (if they will needs have and hold it) only of those deplorable Objects of pitty; I mean, the *CONFOUNDERS; and of such unreasonable *fellows* as have no *Faith*, or are worse then Infidels in forsaking the Faith which they professe to have. God forbid that you should be any of that sort or sect, that dare apply the sacred Institution of that *setling* and confirming Seal, the Lords Supper unto themselves, before they be *set* and seated in the Lords House, and have it regularly, with the allowance, and by the hands of the Stewards of his House; whose Office it is to give their fellow-servants their several Portions in due seasons. For I presuppose that ye dare not say, That any ought to administer these *Mysterious* things, save only they that are solemnly call'd thereunto, as was *Aaron*, *Heb.*5.4.

* These creatures, when they came first swarming from the North, were called *Quakers*.

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3. The third, is that which *promiſeth* a princely *prizing* of Chriſtians as Chriſtians, and acceptance to ones perſon and performances; although he were the Offſpring of infamous Anceſtors: as 'tis apparent by what is propheſied *Iſaiah* 56. 4, 5, 6 verſes, *Let not the ſon of the ſtranger, which is joyned to the Lord, ſay, The Lord hath ſeperated me utterly from his people: nor let the Eunuch ſay, Behold, I am a dry tree: For thus ſaith the Lord, to the Eunuches that keep my Sabboths, and chuſe the thing that pleaſeth me, and take hold on my Covenant, even unto them will I give a* Name, *better then the* Name *of Sons and Daughters, and make them* joyfull *in the Houſe of Prayer,* &c.

If joyfull admittance and acceptance be a priviledge that pertains to all thoſe perſons that take hold on Chriſt, who is the Surety of the better Covenant, by making and keeping it with God, and marching to the holy Mountain of his Meeting-Houſe: as is expreſsly mentioned in *Ezek.* 20.37. *And I will cauſe you to paſſe under the rod, and I will bring you into the bond of the Covenant.* And the 40 verſe, *I will chuſe you out from among the Rebels, in the high Mountain of Iſrael, ſaith the*

the Lord God then ſhall the Houſe of Iſrael, and all the Land ſerve me, there will I accept them.

What then, but diſacknowledgement, diſregard, and excluſion from coming within Chriſts *gates*, can be the expectation of thoſe perſons, that have ſo long neglected Chriſts *Houſe*, or elſe have behaved themſelves badly there? What elſe can they think to have, then non-acceptance of their perſons and performances? What other complement can their *eares* expect to hear from Chriſts moſt ſacred mouth, then a *Verily, verily, I know you not?* Mat. 25. 11. What other Ceremony can they imagine they ſhall be received with, then a *Depart from me ye curſed*, Mat. 25. 41. And what greater acceptance can they look for at the *Servants* hands, then that which they had of the *Maſter?* Surely, Chriſts retinue and attendance may not *reſpect* thoſe whom their Lord and Maſter doth *diſreſpect?*

4. The fourth, is that which aſſureth *Proſperity* of the ſoul, and a flouriſhing eſtate, whereof the antient Saints did uſe to ſing in the Pſalm for the Sabboth. *Pſal.* 92. 12, 13. *The righteous ſhall flouriſh like a Palme Tree, and ſhall grow like a Cedar in Lebanon: Such as be planted in the Houſe*

Houſe of the Lord, ſhall flouriſh in the Courts of our God.

Have the forſakers of Gods Houſe and Goſpel-Inſtitutions, any grounded hope that they ſhall graciouſly flouriſh? Who need to fear their flouriſhing, if not ſuch forſakers? Who for ſuch acts, are eſteemed inveterate enemies, as *Pſal.* 74.4,5,6,7,8. *Thine Adverſaries rore in the midſt of thy Congregation, and ſet up banners for ſignes.—But now they break down the Carved work thereof, with axes and hammers: They have caſt thy Sanctuary into the fire, and raſt it to the ground, and have deſtil'd thy dwelling place, and ſaid, Let us deſtroy them altogether, they have burn't all the Sinagogues of God in the Land.* And *Pſal.* 83.2. *Let us take to our ſelves the Houſes of God in poſſeſſion.*

Yea alſo, for their unwillingneſſe to be ruled by Chriſts Inſtitutions, are to be openly ſlain before Chriſts own eyes: as is moſt evident in *Luke* 19. 27. *Moreover theſe mine enemies, that would not that I ſhould reign over them, bring them hither, and ſlay them before me.*

5. The fifth, is that which warrants *purifying* of ſouls from flaviſh feare, dread of death, and is as Flaggons of Wine

Wine of conſolation, to conſcientious walkers in Chriſt Church-waies: as is promiſed in *Iſaiah* 25. 6. *And in this mountain* (to wit, the Church) *ſhall the Lord of Hoſts make unto all people a Feaſt of fat things, a Feaſt of Wines on the Lees, of fat things full of marrow, of Wine on the Lees well refined. He will deſtroy in this Mountain, the face of the covering caſt over all people, and the veil that is ſpread over all Nations, and ſwallow up death in victory.* So *Heb.* 12. 18. *For ye are not come into the Mount, that might be touched, and that burned with fire, nor unto blackneſſe, darkneſſe, and tempeſt.--So terrible was the ſight, that Moſes ſaid, I was exceedingly afraid, and quak't. But we are come to mount Zion, and unto the City of the living God, the heavenly Jeruſalem, and an innumerable company of Angels: To the generall Aſſembly, and Church of the firſt born which are written in Heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the ſpirits of juſt men made perfect: And to Jeſus Chriſt, the Mediatour of the New Covenant, and to the blood of ſprinkling, that ſpeaks better things then that of Abel.*

Is't probable that they ſhall partake of ſuch a peculiar mercy of God, who will

not

not appear in the open Mount of publique Means of Grace?

Is this Wine, or any part of all this provision, promised to, or prepared for, persons that will not be perswaded to wait at the door-posts of the House of Wisdome?

Do we dare to believe, that they have as yet attain'd unto either blessed boldnesse, or any other endlesse benefit, by the sprinkling of the blood of Christ, who do not endeavour nor desire to Covenant with, or conform to the obedient members of the Church of the first born.

6. The sixth, is that which assures a Christian that he hath a claim to an admirable *Apellation*, or New Name, *Isa.*62.2. *And the Gentiles shall see thy righteousnesse, and all Kings thy glory.---And thou shalt be called by a new Name: Thou shalt also be a Crown of glory in the hand of the Lord, and a Royal Diadem in the hand of thy God. It shall be no more said unto thee, Forsaken, nor to thy Land, Desolate: but thou shalt be called Hepzibah, and thy Land Beulah, for the Lord delights in thee.* So Rev.3.12. *Him that overcomes, will I make a Pillar in the Temple of my God, and he shall go no more out. And I will write upon him the Name*

Name of my God, and the Name of the City of my God, which is the New Jeruſalem, which cometh down out of Heaven, and I will write upon him a New Name.

Can any have an approved Intereſt in Chriſts Name or Nature, that care not (by converting and confirming graee), to be knit to Chriſt himſelef, and his Congregational Church in a Conjugall Covenant? Without converſie, they will be made known to be vile and notoriouſly vitious Citizens, who have no Name in any viſible City, as were thoſe graceleſſe companions that are condemned in the Goſpel of *Luke*, 19.14.

7. The ſeventh, is that which aſſures converted Parents muſt evidently of the hopefull *Education*, and heavenly Election of their Children: as 'tis apparently promiſed in *Iſa.*65 19 22. *And I will rejoyce in Jeruſalem, and joy in my people; and the voice of crying ſhall be no more heard: for as the daies of the tree are the daies of my people, and mine Elect ſhall enjoy in old age the work of their hand; they are the ſeed of the bleſſed of the Lord, and their buds with them.*

Who can affirm, that thoſe Infants do relate to Chriſts Elect Flock, whoſe Father hath

have relinquish't Christs Fould? and do love to live out of it. Shall not the sinnes of such Parents be visited upon their children, when his sanctifying Spirit that is in his Covenant-Servants, shall rest in their seed, and seeds seed, from generation to generation? according to what is recorded, *Isa.* 44. 34. *I will pour my Spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thy Off-spring, and they shall spring as among the grasse, as willows by the water-courses.* So Chap. 54. 13. *And all thy Children shall be taught of the Lord, and great shall be the peace of thy Children.* And Chap. 59. 20. *The Redeemer shall come to Zion, and to them that turn from transgression in Jacob.--For this is my Covenant with them, saith the Lord, my Spirit that is upon thee, and my words that I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seeds seed, saith the Lord.*

But if the Mother live a *Jezabells* life, will not Christ *kill* her Children with death? and cause ALL the Churches thereabouts, to know, that he himself hath been the searcher for the foul offences of such Mothers or Fathers, as

are

are Church defilers: as 'tis threatned in *Rev.*2.22,23.

8. The eighth, is that whereby God is engaged to free *from* sorrow, and to fill *with* Joy, the souls of his Covenant-Servants, in Church-fellowship: as 'tis to be seen in expresse termes, *Isa.*65.13,14,17, 18,19. *Behold, my Servants shall rejoyce, but ye shall be ashamed: they shall sing for joy of heart, but ye shall cry for sorrow of heart, and howle for vexation of spirit. Be glad and rejoyce for ever, in that which I create; for behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoycing, and her people a joy, and the voice of weeping shall be no more heard, nor the voice of crying*, &c.

Have they either Rule or Reason to rejoyce, that refuse to relate to the heavenly *Jerusalem*, or to spend their whole time in his spiritual Temple, with the eminent triumphers, mentioned in *Revel.* 7.9,10,15,17. *After this, I beheld a great multitude, which no man could number, of all Nations, and Kindred, and people, and tongues, stood before the Throne, and before the Lamb, cloathed with White Robes, and Palmes in their hands, crying with a loud voice, Salvation to our God. Therefore they are before the Throne of God, and*

serve

serve him day and night, and God shall wipe away all teares from their eyes. So Chap. 12. 12. *Rejoyce therefore ye Heavens, and ye that dwell therein.*

Who besides notorious *flatterers*, dare *affirm that* they are heavenly *Christians*; or perswaded with *Japhet*, to dwell in the Tents of *Shem* with Christ, who dare *affront* and disobey his Combinational Churches? May they be said to be *regular* rejoycers in the King of Saints, who refuse either to walk with, or work among his conformable Subjects? Truly those, and only those children of men that dare give the lye to God, will stand to such an Assertion.

9. The ninth, is that which laies down a ground of hope, for to enjoy a considerable quantity of *outward goods*, and earthly comforts: as 'tis found, affirm'd, and confirm'd, *Psal.* 23. the 1, 5, 6, verses, *The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want.*-- *Thou preparest a Table before me, thou anointest my head with oyl; my Cup runnes over. Surely goodnesse and mercy shall follow me all the daies of my life: and I will dwell in the House of the Lord for ever.* So *Isa.* 65. 21. *They shall build Houses, and inhabit them; they shall plant Vineyards,*

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9. The ninth, is that which laies down a ground of hope, for to enjoy a conſiderable quantity of *outward goods*, and earthly comforts: as 'tis found, affirm'd, and confirm'd, *Pſal.* 23. the 1, 5, 6, verſes, *The Lord is my Sheapherd, I ſhall not want.--Thou prepareſt a Table before me, thou anointeſt my head with oyl; my Cup runnes over. Surely goodneſſe and mercy ſhall follow me all the daies of my life: and I will dwell in the Houſe of the Lord for ever.* So *Iſa.* 65. 21. *They ſhall build Houſes, and inhabit them; they ſhall plant Vineyards,*

and eat the fruit thereof--They shall not build, and another inhabit, they shall not Plant and another eat. And *Ezek.* the 34. 25, 26. *They shall dwell safely in the wilderness, and sleep in the woods, and I will make them, and the places round about them, a blessing, and will cause the shower to come down in his season: there shall be showers of blessing.*

Though sometimes the best of the Lords Covenant Servants, as *Elias*, and *Paul*, may be brought to a very low ebbe for the things of *this life*, yet was there ever any want of food convenient, or any other necessary good, to such as were faithfull dwellers, that is to say, weldoers, in the House of God?

Although the Dew of Heaven, and the fatnesse of the Earth, doth often fall out to be the share of an *Esau*, who falls away from Christs little Flock in *Isaac's* Family, for to live alone as an out-cast *Cain* in in Mount *Seir*, or the Land of *Nod*, which is the place of *Vagrants*; yet is't not easie to observe, that *that* large cut, that is so carved to him and his, is such an unsatisfied *superfluity*, as doth but fatten them for the day of slaughter? And such persons prosperity, is an usuall fore-runner

of

of sore perdition: as it appears *Psal.* 73. 12. *Prov.* 1. 32.

Doth God at any time shower down his true blessings, but about the blessed Sheapherds Tents, where his tame and tractable Sheep and Lambs have their abode?

Can you shew, that any persons are so persued with such devouring distresses, such perplexing poverty, such fearfull Afflictions, as unthankfull Church Members, and evil Church-neighbours are? It being but the fearfull fulfilling of what was fiercely foretold in *Deut.* 28. 47, 48. *Because thou servedst not the Lord thy God with joyfulnesse of heart, for the abundance of all things, thou shalt serve thine enemies, in hunger, thirst, and nakednesse, and in want of all things.* So *Isa.* 8. 21, 22 *When they shall be hungry, they shall fret themselves, and curse their King, and their God. They shall look to the earth, and behold trouble and darknesse, dimnesse of anguish.* So *Jer.* 12. 13, 14. *They have sown Wheat, but shall reap thornes, and put themselves to pain, but shall not profit, because of the fierce anger of the Lord; And they shall be ashamed of your revennes. Thus saith the Lord against his evil* NEIGHBOURS.

10. The tenth and laſt of thoſe Goſpel-Promiſes, which perſons that are out of Church-Covenant, are not in a capacity to cloſe with, or to take comfort from, is, the *Promiſe* of an undoubted *title* to Divine *Teachers*, and an unfeigned propriety to reformed and reforming *Paſtors*: of which ſingular *mercy* ſolemn *mention* is made in both Teſtaments, as in *Iſa.* 30. 20. *Thy Teachers ſhall not be removed any more into a corner, but thine eyes ſhall ſee thy Teachers.* So *Jer.* 3.15. *I will give you Paſtors according to my own heart, who ſhall feed you with underſtanding and knowledge.* And 1 *Cor.* 3.5,9,22. *Who is Paul, and who is Apollo, but Miniſters by Whom ye believed?--For we are Labourers together with God, ye are Gods Husbandry, ye are Gods Building.--Whether Paul, or Apollo, or Cephas, or the World, or life, or death, or things preſent, or things to come, all are yours, and ye are Chriſts, and Chriſt is Gods.* So *Heb.* 13.17. *Obey them that have the rule over you, and ſubmit your ſelves, for they watch over your ſouls, as they that muſt give an account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief, for that is not profitable for you.*

Is't probable that their ſouls ſhall be preſerved from going aſtray after Satan, who unthankfully refuſing to attend on the teaching of publique Teachers, do reject Gods ordinary means of preſervation? Are they not to this day running on in Apoſtacy, who are not related to any *Paſtors?*

Or is't any wonder, that they dare ſo wretchedly to wreſt the Sacred Scriptures, and to wallow in open ſinnes, who will have no *Church Officers* to watch over their ſouls.

NOW I appeal to any profeſſing perſon, that is endued either with conſcience or common ſenſe, whether it be not a known duty, which is due to Chriſt, from all thoſe creatures, who would be accounted Chriſtians, both to obey theſe Ten memorable *Precepts*, and alſo to embrace theſe Ten merciſull *Premiſes* that are pointed at in this preſent Paper; and whether any one of all the children of *Adam*, is in a capacity to anſwer his expectation in any meaſure (in an ordinary manner) that is not either in very deed, or at leaſt, in deſire and endeavour both converted to Chriſt, and alſo in Covenant with ſome one or other of his *Congregational Churches.*

Thus

Thus not doubting any thing at all, but that every one of you, that is well *gathered* to Christ, and well *grounded* on Christ, will be very willing to be *guided* and *governed* by Christ. This labour, and these lines of love, are left with you all, and all of you with the Lord, by him who is

Yours to be commanded

in any Service that shall

be according to Christ,

MARMADUKE MATTHWS.

AND now let me implore and request every one of you, to be so far tender of Gods not to be stained Honour, and that glorious Profession you have taken upon you, as to eschew both the Name and Nature of a RENDING CHURCH-MEMBER, its repute as well as the reality.

lity, Resolving, by Gods assistance, for the future, to be rebuilding, not *rending* Christs growing Temple; and in the first place, to suffer your selves to be REGULARLY RECA L'D, and in the interim, to joyn both *heart* and *hand*, in sending up *unanimous* Ejaculations, to petition his Divine Majesty, that himself will be pleased to condescend so low, as to bow the Heavens, and to put unto these uncomfortable *beginnings*, a comfortable

E N D.

Errata.

PAge Pref. 4. line 8. for *too* read *to*. p. Pref. 6. *ult* for *own*, *own* r. *one*, *one*. p. 10. l. 19. for *B*[illegible]*thers* r. *Brother*. p. 17. l. 12. for *found* r. *bound*.

LENT.

Two other new pieces of this Autho[illegible] have past the Presse this Term [illegible] Mr *Simon Miller*, and are Sold by him [illegible] the Star in *Pauls* Church-yard.

The one, Intituled, *The Messiah Magn[illegible]fied by the mouthes of Babes in America.*

The other, *The New Congregation[illegible] Church, prov'd to be the Old Christia[illegible] Church.*

There is also expected a fourth, as a fu[illegible]ler Answer to the *Arch-Deacon*, which w[illegible] also contain a bit for the erroneous tee[illegible] his Epistolizer Dr *J. T.* to chew the cud upon